

EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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PRESS RELEASE

Statement of Brigadier General Ronald Bailey at the Armed Forces Division

DHAKA, DECEMBER 7 -- U.S. Brigadier General Ronald Bailey addressed his Bangladeshi and U.S. military and civilian colleagues December 7 at the Armed Forces Division in Dhaka to mark the transition of the U.S. military's immediate humanitarian relief efforts in Bangladesh to a long-term operation to be headed by the U.S. Mission in Dhaka.

BEGIN TEXT:

Shakespeare once said, "We few, we happy few, we band of brothers; for he to-day that sheds his blood with me shall be my brother." As I look around and express my thoughts and sympathy for those who have lost family members and the loss that has occurred in this country, I am reminded that we are a band of brothers. And those who wear a uniform understand that we are bound together by some common themes, some common terms and a common way of life.

And I say that because when we received the call for help, it came via the US Embassy, via the US Presidency, which passed it on to the military which began to work immediately after the cyclone hit. I knew for a fact that we understood the mission. Mission is a common term we understand. Objective - a common term we understand. We may wear the uniforms of different countries, but we are bound together by a common bond. Character...integrity...those are the things that bring us together and during this cooperation, we were brought together. We were brought together for several reasons. We are at this point and station in our lives because we are supposed to be at this point and station in our lives because of those who are distressed. And to the Bangladesh people, this coming together by the US government, represented by the US Embassy, NGOs, and USAID. We did something special...we did something remarkable. We saved lives. I will never forget the comment that General Moeen made that no would die of starvation or lack of water. That will remain with me for the rest of my life.

I would like to share a term with you that is common to all Marines anywhere in the world and is fitting for this ceremony. It is Semper Fidelis. Semper Fidelis means always faithful. And we will always be faithful when the call comes. It is not a temporary motto. It does not have a temporary meaning because we as Marines and you as the Bangladesh military understand that those bonds are created in the tough circumstances that we have all been a part of. We are all brothers. This is the code that we all understand. We were brought together at a time when we needed to be brought together. It binds us when we are challenged and it will connect us forever and ever. It has been my true pleasure to be here and to have the opportunity to experience the love and the compassion of the Bangladesh people.

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You are a loving people and I respect you and I look forward to working with you again at some date and time and I hope that it is not in reference or in relation to a cyclone or a storm, but as a friend. The relationship will remain forever and will forever remain strong and Semper Fidelis will ring throughout forever. .

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GR/ 2007